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## GETTING SETTLED

BY KATHERINE POPE

Author of "The House of a Happy Poor Woman"

IN settling a place I believe a large part of the perplexity and delay may be laid at the door of overelaboration, rug-makers, wall-paper folk, upholsterers, tapestry-designer, bestowers of cushions, all seeming victims of the craze for the complex, the "decorative." The distraught housewife in viewing the sum of unrestful, discordant "decorations" that burden the average household, wonders if ever she can bring about an atmosphere of repose and unity.

In a recent personal moving and settling, wearied by undue exertion, by the unaccustomed survey of our impedimenta en masse, I was tempted to sink down in the sea of senseless stuff and surrender unconditionally, ready to confess that repose and harmony were not to be obtained. But after a brief period of relaxation I found myself in a better mood for planning, thought grew clearer, there came some flashes of inspiration; in the course of time a plan for each room grew definite, desk and chair and bookcase introducing nearest of kin and assembling themselves in the right grouping. Finally all that flotsam and jetsam became good salvage.

Most of us, even in these days of widespread luxury, must in our house-beautifying take what materials we have at hand, approach ideals, apply principles by means of what we already possess. And while this often seems a handicap, there is involved gain as well as loss; associations counting for much for old sake's sake, and the old sometimes counting for very considerable in giving individuality to a home.

But the setting up of old wreckage in a new place cannot be done in a day; to get good results one has to experiment, shift and draw largely on one's stock of patience. In the personal household change referred to, Hilda and I drag a rug approximately the right size and coloring into the new dining-room to find that the elaboration of the rug is very quarrelsome with the elaboration of the wall, that though the soft browns go together admirably, the complicated designs go not at all—that we shall have to be extravagant and get a new floor-covering for the dining-room. But we are able to put the discarded rug into a bedroom whose walls are of one tone, and fortunately here

the walls are plain and of a creamy-chocolate color. We turn next to our "best" room, lay down our best rugs, Persian gifts of a rather vivid though rich coloring. Our new home having been "decorated" ere we moved in, the "best" room is of that shade of green held dear by the average decorator, but held very cheap by the beauty-loving home-maker. As Hilda and I place the rugs, the afternoon sun streams in through the wide west windows and jeers at our conjoining of durable reds and verdant green. Cheap, impossible it is; I sink down hopelessly on the colorful rugs and gaze gloomily at the colorful walls. But with me hope rises, as a rule, after a little rest, and following a brief closing of my eyes and an attempt at the closing out of consciousness for a moment, I arise somewhat refreshed and start forth in search of a fairly intelligent workman. I find the right kind of man, I help in mixing his colors, and I obtain walls of a creamy-chocolate like those in the bedroom where the mixey brown rug is reposing.

A little joy enters my tired soul as I look upon the soft brown walls and the oiled woodwork of dull red; note that our bright rugs are toned down by the soft hues of wall, mantel, bookshelves and casings, that the effect now is rich instead of glaring. I go out to the wreckage piled there in the kitchen and rescue various pieces of dark-colored furniture, then experiment until I find those that prove, as Hilda says, "becoming to the room."

In the bedroom with creamy-brown walls I choose for the bed-covering and for the wide closet doorway an art crash gray in tone but relieved by threads of brown and having a pleasing border of green leaves with brown blossoms and buds. The single bed of dull brass stands with the crash curtain for a panel background and sets out far enough to allow of easy access to the shallow closet; the rocker by the French window leading onto a small but very precious balcony, is cushioned in the gray-brown crash with green-and-brown border. In this room we set up the old-fashioned dresser of ash trimmed with walnut, place here the old family portraits (it is Grandmother's room) in their quaint oval frames, the framed sampler, a brass candlestick and waxen candle.



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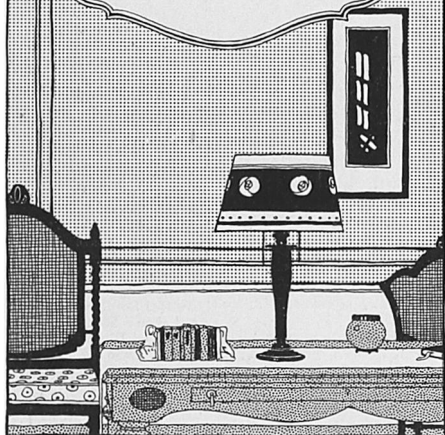
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CHICAGO

The possession of some gray-blue wash rugs, direct in the setting of the largest bedroom. The walls here are a lovely gray, the ceiling is a soft yellow, and I long to carry out a gray and yellow harmony, recently having come upon just the bedroom set for such a room, dove-gray wood and yellow cane-work. But I cannot sacrifice the old just to get new, so have to compromise, have to engage in more adjusting. Knowing it not the best, but having to make the best of the matter, I take the rugs as keynote (instead of walls and ceiling) and endeavor to have their hue assert itself. A long skirt box is neatly covered with an art denim of a beautiful pale gray-blue, a rocking-chair is cushioned with the same, a gray-fringed cover is made for the reading-table that stands beside the bed, and some old creamy Madras curtains with gray-blue figures are brought forth and found admirable here. A writing-desk, a bureau, a washstand and some chairs are picked out from the huddle in the kitchen and anchored safely in this spot; and there is another room that "will do," is at least quiet and reposeful.

A bed-sitting-room, my own retreat, has to be furnished with the remaining odds and ends, and it requires much wrinkling of brows to arrive at what of Wagnerian harmony results. The big rolltop desk I positively cannot surrender, and the piano-size and weight bookcase. Also my long oval mirror I cannot get along without, and of course my high chiffonier. A joblot, of a truth; only three of the many pieces that have to go into the room are of the same wood and finish. It takes patient experiment, I assure you, much trial and change, to arrive at an acceptable result.

The room has been "decorated" a cold (and cheap) light blue. The rug I have to use is a Wilton (they never wear out) wherein predominates a good assertive Delft blue, and which shows on close inspection a considerable amount of cheerful red; in addition there is much elaboration of design. Unquestionably nothing else here dare be "decorative." Fortunately the walls are plain. But of all my numerous couch covers there are none undecorated. A gay hand-woven silken spread makes unrest when brought into strong relief with that rug. A quiet-mannered brown brocade cover declares itself immediately as not belonging, as used just because it happens to be on hand. An excellent green one loses its ex-

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cellence in this environment and is quickly retired. A new cover being a necessity, the Delft blue of the rug is decided on as the color, and exactly the right shade is found in a superior quality of art denim. The texture is good, the coloring is perfect; and when the new covering is spread on the couch, the hoped-for effect is more than realized. This success inspires me to an attempt at bringing the diverse articles of furniture into some friendly association. Essentials are seen to first, the big desk is put into the best light in the room, the bookcase is placed along the same wall convenient for the worker, a Vienna bent-wood chair is anchored at the desk; and happily these three articles are of the same family of wood and of the same finish. But now remain the chiffonier of brown oak, the antique black-framed mirror, the little toilet table of curly birch and the white and gilt low chair belonging thereto!

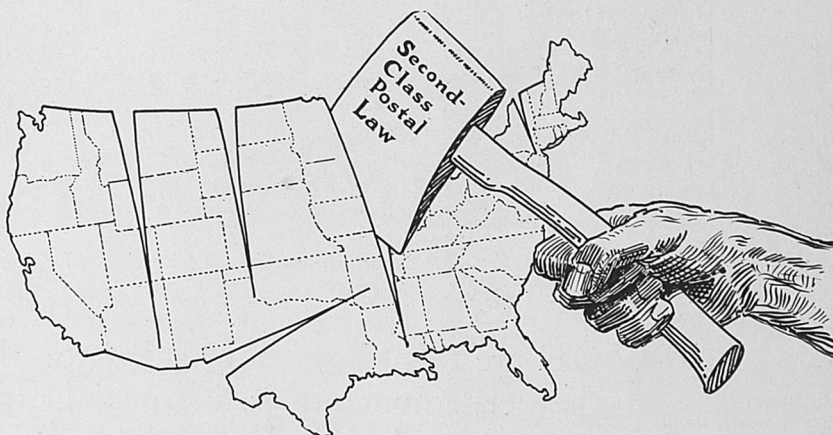
The final solution of the vexed problem? The browner oak is pushed into a dark corner where shadows will make excuse for it; the blackness of the antique mirror is given some relation to something by the introduction on the walls here and there of black-framed pictures; likewise the white and gilt chair is given some relationship to something by the introduction on the walls of a flower study here, a gilt-framed landscape and gilt-framed portrait there; likewise the toilet table is given some relation to something by an array of Delft blue and white toilet articles, and on the chiffonier is set a cracker jar of Delft blue and white. The couch pillows are covered with blue and white Japanese crêpe, and the same crêpe is used for the cushions of an oaken Morris chair gotten out of the wreckage. To read about, it must all sound bizarre; and maybe it is, but it is also charming.

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